

Freetown Board of Assessors
Minutes of Monday, July 26, 2021
Virtual Meeting – Zoom.us

Cheryl A. Smith
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2021 AUG 20 AM 9:01

Present: Mike Motta and Jeff Field were present via Zoom. Paul Sadeck was absent at the Town Hall.

Absent: None.

Call to order: Meeting called to order at 3:04 p.m. In conformance with these orders, all votes taken during this meeting were by roll call. The meeting was recorded by Mr. Sadeck.

Executive Session

As Atty. Jeff Blake was present, it was agreed to go into Executive Session right away. A motion was made by Mr. Sadeck, seconded by Mr. Field, to enter into executive session to comply with the provisions of any general or special law; specifically, to discuss Real Estate and Personal Property exemption applications which are not open to public inspection (per M.G.L. Chapter 59, Section 60); and, to discuss strategy with respect to litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the government's litigating position; specifically, *Marie's Way Solar 1, LLC vs. Board of Assessors of the Town of Freetown*; and *Braley Road Solar 4, LLC vs. Board of Assessors of the Town of Freetown*, and to return to open session afterward. When polled, the members voted as follows: Motta – Aye, Field – Aye, Sadeck – Aye.

Results of Executive Session

One application for exemption under Clause 41C was approved, subject to the applicant providing updated financial information. One application for exemption was denied, as the applicant exceeded the maximum asset allowance.

Approval of Minutes

- This item was unintentionally omitted.

Staff Report

The Assistant Assessor had no information to report outside the other agenda items.

Old Business

The first item under this heading was to address the clerical vacancy. The advertising of this position is on hold pending the completion of contract negotiations, so that the position can be advertised at the new pay rate.

The second item to be taken up under Old Business was Second Home Personal Property, about which a brief update was given.

New Business

The Assistant Assessor asked the board to resume a regular meeting schedule, and polled the members as to availability and preference for meeting in-person or virtually. He noted other boards have resumed meeting in-person. Mr. Field was agreeable to meeting in-person, and would be available to do so at 5:30 p.m. or later.

Mr. Sadeck did not have a preference as to in-person or virtual meetings. Consensus was to meeting the second and fourth Mondays of the month, at 3:00 p.m., via Zoom.

Any Other Business Properly Before the Board

Discussion was held on the development occurring at the corner of Friend Street and North Main Street. This property was in the Chapter 61A Agricultural program from FY16 to FY19, and was voluntarily removed at the owner's request beginning in FY20. Review of the Chapter 61A program indicated that since development began within the five-year rollback period, a rollback tax should be assessed. Working back five years from FY21, there would be no tax assessed in FY21 and FY20, and rollback taxes assessed for FY19, FY18, and FY17. The alternate "conveyance tax" would not apply since the owner acquired the property in 1974, which is beyond the 10-year conveyance tax period. A motion was made by Mr. Sadeck, seconded by Mr. Field, to assess the rollback tax for fiscal years 2019, 2018, and 2017. The motion carried unanimously. Mr. Field inquired as to the number of lots in the subdivision being developed, and the subdivision was discussed generally.

Meeting Adjourned

A motion was made by Mr. Field, seconded by Mr. Sadeck, to adjourn. The motion carried unanimously, and the meeting was adjourned at 4:05 p.m.

This is a True Record by me.

Attest: _____
Assistant Assessor